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## DECORATIVE NOTES.

**D** THERE IS A VERY STRIKING PANEL in a screen which shows a large-sized human figure in Chinese costume on a yellow ground. A number of small figures surround it. The embroidery is unusually rich and handsome.

**I**T WAS LONG BELIEVED IN JAPAN that it was impossible to produce a purple lacquer, but "it is the impossible that always happens," and, after repeated experiments, a professor in the Tokyo Semmon Gakko has succeeded in making lacquers of any desired color. In Yokohama a factory has already been established, and is receiving many orders from foreign firms. The reputation of Japanese lacquer ware abroad has suffered during recent years by the production of spurious articles on the continent of Europe, and it is hoped that through the above invention there may be a revival of this art in Japan.

**V**ENETIAN IRONWORK is rapidly finding favor. A package of pliable iron strip, a few tools and a little ingenuity are all that is required. The iron "ribbons" are bent or twisted according to some design, and the result is an article of decoration at once graceful and of antique appearance. Lanterns, grilles, lamp shades, five o'clock tea stands, flower bowls suspended from brackets or mounted on frames, are a few of the numerous things that can be made.

**V**ERY BEAUTIFUL JAPANESE PORCELAINS are provided for summer use in the form of ice bowls, lemonade bowls, ice cream and tête-à-tête sets, salad bowls and cereal and fruit sets. An historical set of old English blue and white Delft ware is elsewhere in the market. This series was produced in the beginning of the present century by William Ridgway at the Staffordshire manufactory in England, the subject being "The Beauties of America," the different pieces showing representations of buildings celebrated at that time in this country. The set was formerly the property of Miss Eleanor H. Frick, Librarian of the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, and in whose family this possession was retained until it passed recently into the hands of dealers.

**C**APRICE HAS MUCH TO DO with change of patterns in wall papers. An old one when good may never lose its popularity, provided, in some cases, the customer doesn't know it is old. Here is a good story told by an American dealer in wall paper who has in stock a frieze made by the Birge factory ten years ago. It sold so well in connection with ingrains that the dealer bought the last the makers had. Five years later another frieze of the same sort, of different pattern, was also a marked success. The dealer and his employees privately dubbed one the "old chestnut," the other the "new chestnut." Recently a gentleman called to select a paper for his library. He chose an

olive shade of ingrain, but found it difficult to get a frieze to suit it. Finally the dealer said in an undertone to his assistant, "Get me a roll of the 'old chestnut.'" It proved to be just the thing. The gentleman said he would bring his wife and daughter to endorse his selection. In about a week they came, but had forgotten the previous selection. "Why, don't you remember?" queried the customer. "It was a combination of an olive ingrain with that handsome 'old chestnut' frieze." His customer evidently thought the name, which had not been mentioned for his ears, was the recognized trade term for the pattern.

**A** COMBINATION of red, white and blue marks the newest table decorations. It bids fair, too, to become popular, as the three colors are most becoming to either gold or silver plate. The idea, as with others of the present, had its origin in the London jubilee, when the table decorations at Buckingham Palace were altogether of red, white and blue. The colors being also our own, no American can be accused of Anglophobia in adopting them, while of the novelty of such patriotic table adornments there can be no doubt:

## MONOGRAMS. BY WM. Q. TOLMAN.

**M** AT THE PRESENT TIME monograms are greatly in demand, and the young man or woman with a talent in this direction, is much sought after to adorn the fans or note-heads of their many friends.

There will be found presented—in the accompanying page of designs—the twenty-six letters and the symbol (&) embodied in nine monograms, to give the amateur all the combinations possible within the scope, without making use of the same letter more than once.

From the beautiful works of the monks of by-gone ages, has been derived the style of lettering styled monogram used at the present day for various decorative purposes, and to give to the marks of ownership the most elaborate style of ornamentation. These old designs were wrought upon vellum—often dyed a beautiful purple—with gold and silver, and colors of richest hue.

The designing of monograms is the most artistic part of the engraver's trade at the present day, and may be safely classified as an art. There are makers of rubber type who advertise books on monograms for one dollar each, in which it is claimed that any combination may be found in a short time, but one could search long without discovering on an engraver's bench. They are printed to help beginners, and while they may be very good in their way, it must be borne in mind that the true artist of monograms is born, not made.

The utmost latitude is given to the designer in the formation and ornamentation of the letters in such a combination, providing both form and ornament are strictly artistic. It is also well to have both sides balance, no matter what the letters are; but this is not compulsory.

Avoid making a part of one letter answer for a portion of another; as for example—the cross-bar of the H, playing the same part in the A. And last, but not least; study every monogram you come across, it matters not how poor a combination, for in monograms as in music, the discords tend to make the harmony the sweeter. My next article and designs will be upon ciphers, a style much used, not only among engravers, but china painters as well.